

SITUATION REPORT NO. 22
INCIDENT NO. 97-015
DATE: APRIL 16, 1997 TIME: 12:00 P.M.

TO: Governor Edward T. Schafer
State Capitol
Bismarck, ND 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Spring flood statewide.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: To date, seven people have died as a result of problems created by the winter storm and flooding.
3. DAMAGES: By April 16, the National Weather Service expects the Red River of the North at Wahpeton to surpass its 19.2 foot flood-of-record level set only 10 days ago. Latest forecasts call for the river to reach 19.5 feet by April 17. Contributing to rising river levels are discharges from Lake Traverse in Minnesota, where the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has been steadily increasing releases to 7,000 cubic feet per second (cfs). Upstream from Wahpeton, several breakouts are occurring creating the strong potential for overland flooding in the Wahpeton area.

Downstream, the Red River at Fargo rises slowly; predictions still call for the river to crest at 39 feet by early April 17. In Grand Forks, the river level rose more than two feet during the past 24 hours and should surpass its 48.8-foot flood of record within two days. Latest forecasts call for the river to rise to 49 feet to 49.5 feet by April 17 and then to slowly rise to its predicted 50-foot crest by April 20-22. Recent rises are due to inflows from Red Lake River in Minnesota. As a result of rising waters, the Point Bridge between East Grand Forks and Grand Forks has been closed and will not be reopened until the river crests and then drops to 44 feet.

Tributaries of the Red River are also experiencing significant gains. The Goose River near Hillsboro had risen three feet between April 14 and April 15. The river is expected to rise another six to seven feet by April 17-18, the result of overland flooding and snowmelt.

The flood waters of the Sheyenne River persist in causing problems. The river is flowing overland and is entering the Wild Rice River Basin. Breakouts are causing extensive overland flooding, according to the Weather Service.

The Weather Service expects the James River at LaMoure to rise to one-half foot above its 14-foot flood stage on April 19, the result of snowmelt and increased releases from the Jamestown and Pipestem Dams. Rises are dependent, in part, on the amount of runoff. The USACE has gradually been increasing releases from the two dams and plans to reach a combined release of 1,800 cubic feet per second (cfs) by April 20.

The status of North Dakota rivers and tributaries above flood stage are in the following order: station location, flood stage, today's 8:00 a.m. stage, the 24-hour difference and flood-of-record level:

Red River

Wahpeton : 10 ft., 19.06 ft., +0.06 ft., 19.2 ft.
Hickson: 30 ft., 37.56 ft., +0.49, no record
 Fargo: 17 ft., 38.54 ft., +0.66 ft., 37.3 ft.
Halstad, MN 24 ft., 39.74, not available, 39 ft.
East Grand Forks 28 ft., 47.49 ft., +2.21 ft., 48.8 ft.
Oslo, MN 28 ft., not available, 38.6 ft.
Drayton 32 ft., 36.82 ft. +1.49 ft., 43.7 ft.

Wild Rice

Abercrombie: 10 ft., 24.91 ft., +0.66 ft., 24.6 ft.

Maple River

Enderlin: 6 ft., 13.64 ft., +1.73 ft., 15.4 ft.

Goose River

Hillsboro: 7 ft., 8.91 ft., +2.69 ft., 16.8 ft.

Sheyenne River

Cooperstown: 12 ft., 17.33 ft., +0.23 ft., 18.69 ft.
Lisbon: 11 ft., 14.87 ft., +0.79 ft., 19 ft.
Kindred: 16 ft., 19.62 ft., -1.91 ft., 21.7 ft.

Sheyenne Diversion

Horace: 23 ft., 24.24, not available, no record
West Fargo: 16.5 ft., 22.45 ft., 0 ft., 21.5 ft.
Harwood: 884 ft., 891.89 ft., +0.08 ft., 890.70 ft.

Souris River

Bantry: 11 ft., 12.84 ft., -0.02 ft., 14.6 ft.
Westhope: 10 ft., 11.12 ft., 0 ft., 19.2 ft.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from the first report.

STATE: No change from the first report.

FEDERAL: No change from the first and second reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: In Richland County, the United Way donated \$10,000 to the Salvation Army and \$10,000 to the American Red Cross to assist the agencies with their Red River Valley flood fight.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: Maj. Keith D. Bjerke, State Coordinating Officer, and Lesli A. Rucker, Federal Coordinating Officer, have signed the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)-State Agreement. The agreement outlines the scope of federal assistance available to all North Dakota counties.

A training session will be held on April 22 for state and federal inspectors who will write Damage Survey Reports (DSRs) for Public Assistance. The inspectors will begin April 23 with 22 western North Dakota counties and move east as flood water subside. The DSRs are for Public Assistance categories A and B, debris removal and protective measures. Inspectors will also conduct a Preliminary Damage Assessment (PDA) for Public Assistance categories C through G, which include road systems, water control facilities, buildings and equipment, public utility systems and park and recreational facilities. The PDA will be used to determine if these categories will be covered under the disaster. The initial 22 counties include: Divide, Burke, Renville, Bottineau, Williams, Mountrail, Ward, McKenzie, Dunn, McLean, Golden Valley, Billings, Mercer, Oliver, Stark, Morton, Slope, Hettinger, Grant, Bowman, Adams and Sioux.

The N.D. Department of Agriculture plans to open an Agriculture Information Center at 8:00 a.m. on April 17 to assist state farmers with problems resulting from the winter storm and flood disaster. The toll-free number is (888) 337-8632. The phone line will be staffed from 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. with representatives of the Department of Agriculture, the North Dakota State University Extension Service and the Farm Service Agency.

Disaster Recovery Centers (DRCs) will be established first in western North Dakota and then in the east, as flood waters subside. The centers' staff will explain to disaster victims the Individual Assistance programs that are available to them. Local, state and federal officials are coordinating plans for locations of the DRCs. The state Individual Assistance staff is hiring temporary personnel to process flood victims' claims. These staff members will be located at the State/Federal Disaster Field Office (DFO) in Bismarck. Applicants should call (800) 462-9029 to register for assistance.

State and federal officials are scheduled to meet at 9:00 a.m. April 18 at the State Capitol's Brynhild Haugland Room to review Individual Assistance programs available to disaster victims. Participants will include state and federal agencies responding to the disaster.

To date, 1,932 North Dakotans have registered for Individual Assistance programs by contacting FEMA's National Teleregistration Center. To date, FEMA has mailed 128 checks totaling \$118,480 to recipients of Disaster Housing assistance. This program provides grants to homeowners and renters for housing repair or rental assistance.

The N.D. National Guard has been pre-positioning equipment, such as pumps and helicopters, to allow for a quick response to the needs of communities fighting rising flood waters. The National Guard presently has 15 active missions, five pending and 88 completed missions. As of April 15, personnel on state active duty include 215 Air Guard and Army Guard members.

As flood waters continue to rise, the U.S. Coast Guard assisted a private air boat operator with two evacuations, one involving a child and the second an adult, in Cass County on April 15. The Coast Guard plans to locate a search and rescue boat crew in Grand Forks by April 16 or April 17.

Crews from the USACE Omaha District and the U.S. Geological Survey are evaluating snow water equivalents in the James River Basin to use a guide for determining releases from the Jamestown and Pipestem dams. The USACE is sending six two- to three-inch pumps to Jamestown.

In anticipation of water levels higher than originally predicted, the USACE St. Paul District will be assessing levees along the Red River to see if they are sufficient to handle expected crests.

A North Dakota Civil Air Patrol air crew flew a mission on April 15 in support of the National Guard's Public Affairs Office.

In Sargent County, Forman city officials passed a motion declaring that an inundated trailer park was unsafe and unhealthy and that residents should be notified to evacuate the area.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: None at this time.
8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.
9. OTHER: North Dakota residents with disaster-related damages are able to apply for all individual assistance programs by contacting the National Teleregistration Center (NTC) at (800) 462-9029.

The Division of Emergency Management's Situation Reports for the spring flood, Devils Lake flood and winter storm are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is: "<http://www.state.nd.us/dem>".

The N.D. State Water Commission posts flood-related information on its Internet home page. The address is "<http://water.swc.state.nd.us>". The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has a "Water Control Home Page" at "<http://www.ncs-wc.usace.army.mil>". The U.S. Geological Survey's Internet home page address is: "<http://srv1dndbmk.cr.usgs.gov/public/>".

Raymond J. Staiger, Acting State Director